

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 18 on page 14 of the specification with the following rewritten paragraph:

a³ --It should be understood that the embodiments shown in Figs. 6 through 9, as well as all of the gripping structure embodiments described above, can be formed on the tampon applicator depicted in Figs. 2 through 5, as well. This is illustrated by example in Figs. 11, 12, 14 and 15.--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

sub B1 1. (Amended) A tampon applicator comprising:

a4 a barrel adapted to house a pledget therein and to receive a plunger therein, said barrel having a fingergrip area adapted to partially house and engage said plunger, said fingergrip area having at least one substantially flattened surface with at least one gripping structure selected from the group consisting of embossments, slits, grooves, louvers, perforations, lances, high wet coefficient of friction material, pressure sensitive adhesive, and any combinations thereof, wherein said fingergrip area has a reduced diameter relative to said barrel,

Q4 wherein said at least one substantially flattened surface and said at least one gripping structure provide gripping ability to overcome ejection forces applied to said barrel by said pledget and/or said plunger.

Please amend claim 5 as follows:

Q5 5. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 4, wherein said at least one substantially flattened surface is at least two substantially flattened surfaces, and wherein each of said at least two angled shoulder surfaces are disposed adjacent to each of said at least two substantially flattened surfaces on said fingergrip area.

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Please cancel claim 6.

Please amend claim 10 as follows:

Q6 10. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein said at least one gripping structure has a position selected from the group consisting of tilted towards an outer surface of said at least one substantially flattened surface, tilted away from an outer surface of said at least one substantially flattened surface, and any combination thereof.

Please amend claim 11 as follows:

04 11. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 1, wherein the tampon applicator further comprises a plunger, and wherein said plunger and said fingergrasp area have substantially the same cross-sectional shape.

Please amend claim 17 as follows:

07 sub 33 17. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 16, wherein said at least one convex surface is at least two convex surfaces, and wherein each of said at least two angled shoulder surfaces are disposed adjacent to each of said at least two convex surfaces on said fingergrasp area.

Please amend claim 19 as follows:

08 sub 35 19. (Amended) A tampon applicator comprising:

a barrel adapted to house a plunger therein and to receive a plunger therein, said barrel having a fingergrasp area adapted to partially house and engage said plunger, said fingergrasp area having at least one concave surface with at least one gripping structure selected from the group consisting of embossments,

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protuberances other than ribs, slits, grooves, louvers,
perforations, lances, abrasive media, high wet coefficient of
friction materials, pressure sensitive adhesives, and any
combinations thereof, wherein said fingergrip area has a reduced
diameter relative to said barrel,

wherein said at least one concave surface and said at least
one gripping structure provide gripping ability to overcome
ejection forces applied to said barrel by said pledget and/or
said plunger.

Please amend claim 23 as follows:

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23. (Amended) The tampon applicator of claim 22, wherein
said at least one concave surface is at least two concave
surfaces, and wherein each of said at least two angled shoulder
surfaces are disposed adjacent to each of said at least two
concave surfaces on said fingergrip area.

Please cancel claim 24.

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 5 and 7 through 23 are pending in the
present application. Claims 6 and 24 have been canceled.